

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SELECTMEN, OVERSEERS OF POOR,
AND ASSESSORS
OF THE
TOWN OF NORTHFIELD,
TOGETHER WITH THE REPORT OF THE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE.
FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEB. 24th, 1883.

TURNERS FALLS, MASS.:
Turners Falls Reporter Steam Printing House, Cecil T. Bagnall, Prop'r
1883.

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Turners Falls Reporter Steam Printing House, Cecil T. Bagnall, Prop'r.

1883.

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TO THE VOTERS AND CITIZENS OF NORTHFIELD :

Your Selectmen would respectfully submit for your consideration the following Report :—

Having deferred the printing of this report to a later date than has been customary heretofore, we are enabled to give you a more complete statement of the business of the past fiscal year. We have succeeded in paying nearly all the indebtedness of the Town to the first of March.

HIGHWAYS.

Judging by the amount paid for Highways the past year it would seem that the new road machine had not been a saving of expense. When we consider that this amount includes about \$125.00 of last year's bills and about \$100.00 in laying drain pipe, we find that the expense of repairing highways the past year amounts to \$1196.09. The highways, the coming year, (if repaired on the plan adopted last year) can be kept in good repair for less money than was expended in this report.

SCHOOLS.

All the indebtedness incurred for the support of Schools, has been paid and included in this report. The amount reported includes about \$250.00 of last year's bills.

CONTINGENT EXPENSES.

In our report under this head, you find reported \$80.25 received from the Town of Gill. This is a balance due Northfield, after settling with Gill, for building one large and one small boat on the part of Northfield, and running the lower ferry for three years on the part of Gill.

Under contingent expenses there is about \$20.00 due which we have given no order for.

SUPPORT OF THE POOR.

The amount paid for the support of the poor has been unusually large. We have three in the Lunatic Hospitals, Mary Pearson, Kate Hamwell and C. C. Smith, at an expense of \$3.25 per week, not including incidentals. Miss Lucretia Prindle in Boston at \$1.00 per week. Archibald Watson, wife and three children, in Boston at an expense of \$8.00 per month. Emory Robbins and Chas. Lord, at \$1.50 each per week. This includes only board and care. Susanna Grout at Bridgewater Work-house, at \$1.75 per week. Mrs. Sallie Elmer, with A. D. Elmer, at \$1.25 per week. Hubbard Phelps, Lucretia Sawyer and Jerusha Doolittle, are cared for in full at the house of Henry Wright, 2nd., at \$2.25 each per week. We are pleased to report that those under the care of Mr. Wright have comfortable rooms and plenty of good wholesome food, and that the others cared for in Town, have good places, and all warmly clad. Some of the poor are reported as paid to Jan. 1, 1883. This comes from the bills being sent in quarterly. To pay the poor bills in full to the first of March, would require about \$175.00. Mr. R. K. Caldwell, guardian of Mary Pearson and Lucretia Sawyer, has paid on account of Mary Pearson, \$150.25, and on account of Lucretia Sawyer, \$117.32.

FINANCIAL CONDITION.

We report a balance in favor of the Town of \$2233.92. Assuming all taxes and bills due the Town to be paid, and deducting \$175.00 for poor and \$20.00 contingent, we shall have cash in the Treasury, \$2038.92

ASSESSORS' REPORT.

Value of Real Estate,	\$553679 00
“ Personal Estate,	73925 00
Total Valuation May 1, 1882,	<u>\$627604 00</u>

No. of acres Land	assessed.	19,127
“ Dwelling Houses,	“	376
“ Horses,	“	358
“ Cows,	“	577
“ Sheep,	“	606
“ Polls,	“	408

TOWN ASSESSMENT FOR 1882.

Appropriated for Schools,	\$2000 00
“ “ Highways,	1500 00
“ “ Contingent Expenses,	1000 00
“ “ Public Library,	375 00
“ “ Payment, of County Tax,	1194 44
“ “ “ “ State Tax,	860 00
Overlay,	162 60
	<u>\$7092 04</u>

TOTAL RAISED BY TAX.

On Polls	\$816 00
“ Real Estate	5536 79
“ Personal Estate,	739 25
	<u>\$7092 04</u>

Rate per cent., \$1.00.

Tax on each poll, \$2.00.

R. K. CALDWELL,	}	ASSESSORS.
R. C. WARD,		
G. F. ALEXANDER,		

HIGHWAYS.

Expenses incurred in repairing highways and bridges, from
Feb. 18, 1882, to Feb. 24, 1883.

Paid R. K. Caldwell,	\$ 18 39
Wm. W. Merriman,	4 95
Fred W. Bass,	29 00
M. C. Miller,	36 65
Pickett Brothers,	45 02
Thos. Mason,	2 50
Myron Chapin,	18 17
F. W. Piper,	30 47
Chas. Moore,	18 15
Lucius Stimpson,	19 37
A. S. Webber,	13 05
Frank Farnsworth,	13 05
Philander Pierce,	7 27
Simon S. Fisher,	6 97
H. J. Dunham,	75
E. M. Turner,	42 55
Earl Chapin,	14 88
Otis T. Greenleaf,	9 75
Chas. L. Robbins,	13 90
Geo. Murdock,	9 00
Chas. Warden,	32 95
H. H. Mason,	45
J. L. Mattoon,	7 00
James Arling,	2 25
W. L. Arling,	5 50
Chas. Parker,	3 75
H. H. Johnson,	7 00
J. W. Park,	4 50
Chas. Pomeroy,	25
Chas. H. Lumburd,	5 25
Thos. Quinlon,	161 50
John P. Wentworth,	41 00
Frank Whithed,	11 70
Oscar Woods,	4 25
Wm. F. Caldwell,	21 88
Haskell Holton, plank,	72 45
Geo. Tyler, plates and points,	10 00
A. W. Shepardson,	5 25
Meloin J. Collar,	2 75

Paid E. A. Smith,	24 47
S. H. Collar,	13 77
James A. Dresser,	2 56
D. E. Bass,	3 09
Wm. E. Merriam,	24 65
E. C. Nash,	9 00
Thomas Boyle,	9 00
James Merriam,	5 10
Elisha Stratton,	2 25
Albert Whitaker	3 40
Wm. H. Stratton,	1 50
S. G. Pratt,	1 50
H. W. Montague,	3 75
H. F. Field,	75
S. G. Titus,	90
A. G. Hale,	17 25
Wm. Burrows,	75
Joel Randall,	59 01
Amos Bigelow,	1 65
James Wall,	194 00
Isaac Murdock,	8 75
Sam'l K. Sawyer,	34 35
Central Vt. R. R., Freight on Pipe,	6 81
Elias Lyman,	3 00
Ansel Collar,	2 25
F. A. Webster,	6 00
Henry Wright,	1 70
Michael Pigott,	10 00
Martin Dickinson,	3 90
John Dale,	3 00
J. Westley Mann,	6 00
Harris Severance,	6 00
James Allen,	1 50
Landman Nye,	3 60
Fred Simonds,	1 50
N. G. Hilliard,	1 50
Amos Whitaker,	3 50
Ansel Field,	14 00
Jas. D. Caldwell,	3 52
Jerry Twine,	4 00
John Mack,	1 25
Adolphus Hale,	1 50

Paid J. C. Pellett, Drain Pipe,	77 00
A. D. Stearns,	1 25
Pliny Cutting,	1 75
E. H. Starkey,	2 10
Geo. R. Stebbins,	6 00
H. J. Evans,	2 10
David Dale, 2nd,	3 15
C. I. Holton,	2 50
W. E. Johnson,	1 50
John H. Robbins,	50
Peter H. Ross,	3 90
D. M. Simonds,	50
Jas. N. Caldwell,	20 40
F. V. Doolittle,	37
Merrill More,	45
Elisha Alexander,	2 90
J. B. Putney,	3 60
F. A. Hilliard,	3 00
Sumner Stratton,	30
Benj. Morrison,	2 47
James Campbell,	3 00
A. R. Barber,	3 30
A. C. Parsons & Son, Cement,	2 81
Asa A. Holton,	6 00
Alvin A. Long,	7 00
C. Vt. R. R., Toll on Road Machine,	3 74
Total Amount Paid for Highways,	\$1421 09

SCHOOLS.

EXPENSE INCURRED FOR THE SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

DISTRICT NO. I.

Paid Eva Stebbins, Teaching and board,	\$246 00
Emma Rhoad, " "	246 00
A. C. Parsons, wood and incidentals,	70 12
Isaac Mattoon,	20 31
Clarence Schnell, care of rooms,	6 00
	\$588 43

DISTRICT NO. II.

Paid Dora Hammond, Teaching and board,	\$160 00
Everett Lyman, " "	240 00

Paid Clarence E. Moody, wood,	19 20	
A. L. Hale, wood and incidentals,	22 42	
Joshua Maynard, care of room,	4 00	
		\$445 62

DISTRICT NO. III.

Paid Belle O. Severance, Teaching and board,	\$ 60 00	
Ida M. Parker, " " "	144 00	
Cornelius Hilliard, wood,	19 00	
J. W. Mann, care room, & incidentals,	6 75	
		\$229 75

DISTRICT NO. IV.

Paid Belle S. Benjamin, Teaching,	\$ 81 85	
Mrs. G. M. Starkweather, Teaching,		
and board,	176 00	
Florence Crocker, Teaching,	60 00	
H. W. Montague, board,	33 00	
Thos. Boyle, wood,	15 75	
E. C. Nash, incidentals,	10 09	
H. F. Field, care of room,	9 60	
		\$386 29

DISTRICT NO. V.

Paid Alice J. Field, Teaching and board,	\$138 00	
Lucius Stimpson, incidentals,	2 00	
Simon S. Fisher, wood,	4 90	
		\$ 144 90

DISTRICT NO. VI.

Paid Ella M. Parker, Teaching,	\$51 00	
Mattie Hammond, " "	30 00	
Maria Colton, " "	30 00	
Otis T. Greenleaf, board,	42 50	
Otis T. Greenleaf, wood and care of room,	7 00	
E. A. Smith, board,	26 00	
Frank Farnsworth, board,	20 00	
		\$206 50

DISTRICT NO. VII.

Paid Cora B. Holton, Teaching,	\$146 50	
John L. Stearns, " "	62 15	
Electa Dickinson, board,	42 00	
Ezra L. Holton, " "	80 00	
P. W. Preston, incidentals,	26 35	
		\$357 00

DISTRICT NO. VIII.

Paid Bernardston, for Schooling,	\$28 53	
Geo. R. Stebbins, for ferrying scholars,	7 00	
		\$35 53

DISTRICT NO. IX.

Paid Irene Mattoon, Teaching and board,	\$235 00	
Haskell Holton, wood,	15 75	
F. C. Howard, incidentals,	12 40	
E. E. Russell, furniture,	5 45	
		\$268 60
Total paid for Schools,		\$2662 62

CONTINGENT EXPENSES.

Paid Henry Wright, care of Town Hall,	\$53 00
Henry Wright, Driving Hearse,	55 00
Henry Wright, Burial permits,	9 00
Henry Wright, care of Town Clock,	15 00
Henry Wright, mowing cemetery,	7 00
F. A. Hilliard, " "	2 00
H. C. Holton, " "	1 50
Myron Chapin, " "	1 50
Jas. D. Caldwell, " "	2 00
Simeon A. Field, water trough,	5 00
H. B. Parker, " "	2 00
H. W. Webster, " "	5 00
Arthur O. Wheeler, " "	3 00
Charles Osgood, " "	8 00
N. W. Purple, " " 1881,	4 50
Library Committee,	375 00
Geo. A. Stearns, building ferry boat,	250 00
Geo. A. Stearns, lumber for small boat,	12 00
Henry Holton, building small boat,	12 16
W. E. Johnson, for road machine,	150 00
Central Vt. R. R., freight on road machine,	12 73
W. S. Carson, Printing town reports,	28 90
W. S. Carson, printing check lists,	9 00
R. K. Caldwell, abatement of taxes 1881,	49 30
Chas. Pomeroy, abatement taxes, Perry Farm, '82,	3 95
H. R. Crowell, " " 1882,	12 50

Paid R. K. Caldwell, expenses appraising school houses	
as per bill,	41 80
R. K. Caldwell, expenses as per bill,	16 43
R. K. Caldwell, balance due for services 1881,	7 80
L. T. Webster, " " " 1881,	14 04
L. T. Webster, for school books,	79 18
L. T. Webster, " " " poor children,	9 30
L. T. Webster, articles furnished Town Hall,	10 33
Henry Wright, care of library room,	2 00
E. H. Starkey, blacksmithing,	2 50
Rev. J. L. Marsh, school furniture,	21 06
Lyman Brothers, repairing furnace,	1 40
Field & Hall, printing,	2 90
Elias Lyman, land damages,	33 34
Warren J. Wright, land damages,	33 34
R. C. Ward, expenses as per bill,	90
A. D. Stearns, repairing ferry boat,	15 25
Town of Erving, repairs on Millers River bridge,	6 00
A. C. Parsons, services as Moderator,	3 00
Cudworth & Childs, insuring town clock,	10 00
Conant & Conant,	26 84
N. W. Purple, water trough,	3 00
Wright Stratton, 5 per cent. discount on taxes,	239 68
" " services as Collector,	75 65
" " " Constable,	14 00
Elias Lyman, " Treasurer,	40 00
" " " Town Clerk,	49 75
" " sundry expenses as per bill,	10 66
S. G. Titus, boards for ferry boat,	3 45
D. W. Benjamin, plank " "	6 49
	\$1869 13

Received of the Town of Gill, in settlement
on account of ferry boat, \$80 25

R. K. CALDWELL,	}	SELECTMEN
R. C. WARD,		OF
G. F. ALEXANDER,		NORTHFIELD.

OVERSEERS OF THE POOR.

Expenses incurred in support of the poor.

Paid Henry Wright, care of Hubbard Phelps, to April 1, 1883,	\$117 32
Henry Wright, care of Lucretia Sawyer, to April 1, 1883,	117 32
Henry Wright, care of David Belknap, 42 weeks and 2 days,	95 14
Henry Billings, care of Samuel Lord, 13 weeks and 5 days,	30 93
Henry Dwight, care of Jerusha Doolittle, to April 1, 1883,	40 64
Henry Wright, for coffins for D. Belknap and S. Lord,	20 00
Hattie Akeley, care of Wm. Webster,	68 45
Wm. H. Holton, board Chas. Lord,	10 50
F. V. Doolittle, " "	61 93
L. T. Webster, clothing for Charles Lord,	12 11
Northampton Lunatic hospital, care of C. C. Smith, to Jan. 1, 1883,	107 36
Worcester Lunatic hospital, care of Mary Pearson, to Jan. 1, 1883,	171 55
Worcester Lunatic hospital, care of Kate Hamwell, to Jan. 1, 1883,	182 19
Commonwealth, care of Susana Grout, to Jan. 1, 1883,	91 25
City of Boston for care of Lucretia Prindle, to Jan. 1, 1883,	36 00
A. D. Elmer, care of Sallie Elmer to Jan. 1, '83,	45 03
C. L. Robbins, care of Emory Robbins, to Jan. 1, 1883,	78 00
Dr. A. V. Bowker, medical attendance on Wm. Smith,	40 00
Dr. E. P. Pierce, medical attendance on W. Bancroft,	22 00
Dr. E. P. Pierce, medical attendance on C. C. Smith,	2 00
Dr. R. C. Ward, medical attendance on C. O. Holton,	25 00
Chas Stratton, care of W. Bancroft,	12 00
L. B. Putney, assistance,	20 00

Paid Wm. Smith, assistance,	10 00
A. C. Parsons & Son, clothing for Chas. Lord,	4 87
Total amount paid for Poor,	<u>\$1421 59</u>
Received of R.K. Caldwell, Guardian of Mary Pearson year 1882,	\$150 25
Received of R. K. Caldwell, Guardian of Lucretia Sawyer, year 1882,	117 32
	<u>\$267 57</u>
Actual cost of Poor, except as before stated,	\$1154 02

R. K. CALDWELL,	} OVERSEERS OF THE POOR.
R. C. WARD,	
GEO. F. ALEXANDER,	

SELECTMEN'S FINANCIAL REPORT.

SELECTMEN IN ACCOUNT WITH THE TOWN OF NORTHFIELD.

Dr.

To orders drawn on Treasurer since Feb. 18,
1882. \$7656 68

Cr.

By Paid L. T. Webster, Selectman,	\$71 63
“ “ H. W. Montague, Selectman,	45 00
“ “ R. K. Caldwell, Selectman,	67 37
“ “ Rev. J. L. Marsh, School Com.,	84 00
“ “ Elias Lyman, “ “	6 75
“ “ Clesson Merriman, “ “	3 50
“ “ A. C. Parsons, Auditor,	2 00
“ “ C. A. Ware, “	2 00
“ “ For Highways,	1421 09
“ “ “ Schools,	2662 62
“ “ “ Support of Poor,	1421 59
“ “ “ Public Library,	375 00
“ “ “ Contingent Expenses,	1494 13
	<u>\$7656 68</u>

R. K. CALDWELL,	} SELECTMEN.
R. C. WARD,	
G. F. ALEXANDER,	

ELIAS LYMAN, TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT WITH THE TOWN
OF NORTHFIELD, FROM FEBRUARY 18, 1882, TO FEBRU-
ARY 24, 1883.

RECEIPTS.

By Cash in Treasury, Feb. 18, 1882,	\$2400	61
Received of R. K. Caldwell, Tax 1881,	540	98
“ “ Wright Stratton, “ 1882,	6800	83
“ “ State Tres'r. Corporation Tax,	975	27
“ “ “ “ Nat. Bank “	435	75
“ “ “ “ St. School Fund,	225	74
“ “ “ “ State Aid,	32	00
“ “ County “ Dog Fund,	79	30
“ “ R. K. Caldwell, ac't. Mary Pierson,	150	25
“ “ R. K. Caldwell, ac't. Lucretia Sawyer,	117	32
“ “ John Dale, rent of Town Hall,	36	00
“ “ L. T. Webster, error on order,	12	00
“ “ Interest on Surplus Revenue,	18	00
“ “ R. K. Caldwell, Auctioneer's License,	2	00
“ from Town of Gill,	80	25
“ of Henry Wright, rent of Town Hall,	52	50
		\$11958 80

EXPENDITURES.

To Paid Outstanding Orders,	\$65	97
“ Selectmen's Orders,	7636	63
“ County Tax,	1194	44
“ State Tax,	860	00
“ State Aid,	48	00
Cash in Treasury as per settlement,	2153	76
		\$11958 80

NORTHFIELD, MASS., FEB. 24, 1883.

We have this day examined the accounts of Elias Lyman,
Treasurer of Northfield, and find the same correct and properly
vouched for.

C. A. WARE,	}	AUDITORS OF NORTHFIELD.
S. G. TITUS,		
A. C. PARSONS,		

ELIAS LYMAN, TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT WITH SCHOOL
DISTRICT No. 1.

Balance of Assessment, 1874,	\$ 26 74
Assessment, 1881,	1259 10
“ 1882,	1700 41
	\$2986 25

RECEIPTS.

Cash on hand,	26 74
1881.	
Aug. 9, Received of R. K. Caldwell,	\$600 00
1882.	
Jan. 30, “ “ “	200 00
March 6, “ “ “	300 00
Aug. 24, “ “ “	159 10
	\$1259 10
1882.	
Aug. 26, received of Wright Stratton,	\$482 96
Nov. 25, “ “ “	400 00
Dec. 8, “ “ “	475 00
1883.	
Jan. 4, “ “ “	315 00
Feb. 15, “ “ “	27 45
	\$1700 41
	\$2986 25

DISBURSEMENTS.

1881.	
Dec. 30, Paid C. H. Green,	\$620 00
1882.	
April 1, Paid “ “	500 00
Aug. 24, “ R. K. Caldwell, Collector,	12 50
“ “ “ “ “ Assessing,	2 00
“ “ “ “ “ Abatements,	16 71
Sept. 4, “ C. H. Green,	620 00
Dec. 8, “ A. R. Lyman, error,	6 28
“ 26, “ C. H. Green,	700 00

1883.

Jan. 4, Paid Committee, expense of lawsuit,	157 08	
“ 30, “ Isaac Mattoon,	27 92	
“ 30, “ C. H. Green,	296 31	
Feb. 15, “ Wright Stratton, Collector,	19 43	
		\$2978 23
Cash in hands of Treasurer,		8 02
		\$2986 25

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE TOWN

FEB. 24, 1883.

Cash in Treasury as per settlement,	\$2153 76	
Due from Collector, for tax of 1882,	291 21	
“ “ State for support of Paupers,	30 00	
“ “ Interest on Surplus Revenue,	50 00	
“ for use of Town Hall from Lecture Com.,	15 00	
“ for use of Town Hall from M. A. Field, (Operetta,)	18 00	
		\$2557 97

DUE AS PER AUDITORS' REPORT.

R. K. Caldwell, Selectman,	\$111 25	
R. C. Ward, “	68 75	
G. F. Alexander, “	53 25	
Rev. J. L. Marsh, School Committee,	65 00	
Elias Lyman, “ “	10 25	
W. J. Wright, “ “	9 55	
C. A. Ware, Auditor,	2 00	
S. G. Titus, “	2 00	
A. C. Parsons, “	2 00	
Balance in favor of the Town,	2233 92	
		\$2557 97

R. K. CALDWELL,	}	SELECTMEN
R. C. WARD,		OF
G. F. ALEXANDER,		NORTHFIELD.

Provided the Town receives all the resources above reported, and pays all debts due March 1st, 1883, there would be left in the Treasury, Cash to the amount of, at least, \$2038.92.

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

In presenting a report of the condition of the schools for the past year we are glad to report a fairly prosperous year. There have been 32 weeks of school in every district, except in No. 5, where there has been but 24, and in No. 6, where there were two schools, of 10 weeks each in the Spring, (one in the school house across the swamp, and one in the South district;) and a Fall and Winter term of 17 weeks in the Greenleaf house.

The schools have been running, on the whole, with much less friction, and with much more satisfaction than last year. Much of this is due to the fact that in five of the schools the same teachers have been employed through the whole year; while in each of the other four there have been but two during the year. Frequent change of teachers is a serious drawback to the efficiency of a school. A moderately good teacher, if continued in the same school, will be apt in the end, to benefit the pupils more than a succession of extraordinary teachers; and much more than frequent alteration between good and poor teachers. We do not mean that a poor teacher should be continued, when his or her failure is manifest—but every teacher whose success is even moderate, should be given an opportunity to improve by experience. The schools where the same teachers have been employed through the year are the schools that appear to the best advantage—and the advantage is not only in appearance. Three terms work under the same teacher has served to clinch the year's study, and the scholars have been able to assimilate more knowledge than they could under different teachers. The teachers also who find the same scholars looking to them for instruction, are better able to adapt themselves to the demands of the school, and to be growing teachers. In visiting the schools we have been pleased to note improvement in the teachers as well as in the scholars. The teachers' better knowledge of the scholars has given her a better realization of their wants, and she has exerted herself to meet them. We note, too, in many cases, better methods of teaching, that have evidently been suggested by contact with other teachers, at the Teachers' Institutes, or from visiting other schools, or from personal experience with children. But the best teachers find their efforts often hindered by the irregular attendance of scholars. It ought not to be a matter of wonder that a scholar who is absent two days out of five, through the term, is not inter-

ested in his school nor improving in his studies; especially as the time when he is absent is usually spent in interesting him in something else.

It is questionable how far parents or guardians have a right to the time of their children during school hours. If the State has a right to compel the attendance of the children upon the Public Schools, it has also a right to say, within certain limits, what the amount and conditions of that attendance shall be. The State requires, every year, 20 weeks attendance at school of every child between 5 and 14 years of age, and these 20 weeks in terms of 10 weeks each. Twenty weeks of aggregate attendance through the year will not answer the requirement of the law. The School Board have authority to compel the attendance of scholars for the 20 weeks, or to compel a fine to be imposed upon parents whose children have not been in school the required time. The present Committee have not enforced this law, though there may be one or two cases where it might be. But that the Committee have a right to compel a more regular attendance is shown by the regulation in many of the larger towns and cities, that a certain number of half day's absence, unexcused, within a specified time, (say 20 half days in any one month) may suspend a scholar from school. We think some such regulation should be made in our schools, and that parents should co-operate more fully with the teachers for their children's good. The moral right which parents have to keep their children from school is even more questionable than the legal. Besides lowering the excellence of the school and preventing the most improvement, irregular attendance lowers the excellence of personal character, by fixing in the disposition of the child a *habit* of carelessness, and of indifference to mental development, which habit will be apt to show itself later in life in a weak and fickle, or, it may be a coarse and brutal, character. The good results of our common schools are not so much in what is stored away in the shape of knowledge, as in the *habits* of studiousness and regularity which are formed while at school. Whatever information is gained is of little use unless it is accompanied with the habit of persistent, thoughtful and regular application. The child whose attendance at school is interrupted by frequent absence, is not forming the habit of regular and plodding persistence which is so necessary to future success.

What has been said in regard to attendance; can be said with perhaps more emphasis as to punctuality. The tardy marks on

the registers show all too little pride on the part of scholars and parents, and sometimes, perhaps, of teachers, in the formation of a habit which is essential to success in every sphere of life. To have a child form the habit of punctuality is worth far more than any item of knowledge that may be lost in 10 or 15 minutes, much more than any bit of work, or any errand that he or she can do in 15 or 30 minutes.

The child who forms the habit of coming into school late will be very apt to be late all through life. The child who is irregular and not punctual in attendance upon school, is learning to be irregular in his business affairs. Always a little behind in paying his debts, his work always dragging, the Spring's work always waiting for the belated Winter's work and the harvest wasting because the Summer is not long enough, while Winter comes always treading on the tardy heels of the unpunctual worker. What has been said as to regularity and punctuality of scholars, is doubly true of teachers. Teachers many times set an example of irregularity which goes far toward accounting for the habits of their scholars. School should begin and end promptly, and follow, each day, a well timed programme which should be faithfully and punctually observed.

It is questionable how far teachers have a right to keep scholars beyond the six hours of a school day. But where parents are so free to keep their children away from school during school hours, they can not consistently complain if occasionally the scholar has to remain after school.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

The school buildings are most of them in tolerably good repair, though some things need to be done in nearly all. All are short of blackboard room. No. 1 and No. 9 are best supplied with this prime essential of a school room. The others are very faulty in this respect. The house in No. 3 sadly needs reseating, thorough cleaning and repairing of walls and ceiling, and made more attractive by neat and whole curtains and clean windows, and a teacher's table and an extra chair.

No. 4 should have a more convenient teacher's desk, and at least one extra chair. This is a want in nearly all the school houses. There should be at least two good chairs at the command of every teacher. In some of the houses there is but one, and that so rickety that the visitor who occupies it has to sit very steady if he values his dignity.

The house in District No. 2 needs a new floor and some other

repairs to make the building safe and suitable.

Under the Town system by which the schools are now managed, the Town will have to authorize, and be responsible for all repairs. There should therefore be an appropriation made for this purpose and placed at the disposal of the School Committee.

In the Grammar Department of District No. 1, every desk has been occupied this Winter, thus suggesting that the time is not far distant when the upper room in that house will have to be fitted up for the establishment of a third teacher. Indeed there is good reason to believe that if a third school could be established under a competent teacher the attendance would be good. Now that the districts have ceased to exist and the schools are directly in the care of the town, is it not time to think of establishing a school that will give advantages needed by the few scholars in every district who have nearly outgrown the benefit of the district school?

Arrangements could be made by the parents and with but trifling expense to convey the scholars to and from school, or to board them where they could attend.

Scholars from No. 3 and No. 4 could be inconvenienced by the R. R., coming up on the morning, returning on the evening train, and traveling on a scholar's ticket which could be obtained from the R. R. at a very reasonable rate.

Scholars from No. 7 and No. 9 could find easy means of conveyance, while from Nos. 5 and 6 the few who who need to come could probably be readily and satisfactorily established within convenient distance.

A school at the Center which would thus supplement the work of the district schools by giving the opportunities of Grammar School and High School instruction would be of great benefit to the rising generation, and we commend this suggestion to your thoughtful consideration.

SCHOOL BOOKS.

With the exception of a change of spelling-books which was begun last year and has been completed this year at a trifling cost to the town, there has been no change of books.

Mr. L. T. Webster is the authorized agent of the town, for the sale of books, and school supplies. His account will be found elsewhere.

With the beginning of the year 1883, the School District system ceased to exist and the Town assumed the manage-

ment of the schools, taking possession of the school property and assuming the financial responsibilities of the districts. This is undoubtedly a move in the right direction. It throws, however, much additional work upon the School Committee, making them responsible for the care of the property, for school supplies, including fuel and repairs, as well as for hiring the teachers. The town has already taken steps toward the appraisal of the district's property and has instructed their School Committee to report as to the number of schools required in town and as to where they should be held.

We are of the opinion that 9 schools, located as they have been the last term would best and most economically accommodate the scholars in town. That is to say, two schools in No. 1, one each in 3, 4, 5 and 9. One in the brick school house in No. 7, and one in the Greenleaf house in No. 6.

The scholars in what was district No. 8, (where there is no schoolhouse) have been schooled, some in No. 7, some in No. 1, and some in Bernardston, and are not badly inconvenienced thereby, and could be continued in that way.

District No. 6, having three school houses is the worst inconvenienced of any in town. Two schools were held in that district last Spring, one across the swamp and one in the South district. Each had an attendance of 9 scholars. The third term was held in the Greenleaf house, with an attendance of 9, one of whom was from across the swamp. The Greenleaf house is the only house where the scholars can all be brought together. With a little effort, (which is a good thing to make,) the scholars might all attend here under one teacher, and be far more benefitted than if they were divided into two or three schools.

We should recommend, therefore, that the school in No. 6 be held in the Greenleaf house.

The committee are of the opinion that 32 weeks' school through the year is rather stinting the amount of schooling. Many of the surrounding towns give 34 and 36, and some 40 weeks of school in the year. An increase in the appropriation of \$150 or \$200, would enable the schools to run 34 weeks.

We would suggest that for the ensuing year there be appropriated for schools, \$2,200 and for repairs on school houses, \$300.

J. L. MARSH,	}	COMMITTEE.
ELIAS LYMAN,		
WARREN J. WRIGHT,		

SCHOOL BOOK ACCOUNT.

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD TO L. T. WEBSTER, DR.

1882.

Feb. 18.	To due L. T. Webster, from last settlement,	\$ 13 34	
July 2,	Paid Cowperthwait & Co.,	28 56	
Aug. 3,	Boston School Supply Co.,	22 32	
“ 30,	A. C. Stockin,	15 00	
Nov. 22,	Taintor Bros. & Co.,	51 84	
1883.			
Jan. 8,	Boston School Supply Co.,	18 09	
“	A. C. Stockin,	11 88	
Feb. 12,	Boston School Supply Co.,	26 95	
“	Books on hand as per invoice,	131 31	
			\$319 29

1882.

CR.

Feb. 18,	By Books on hand at last settlement,	\$79 68	
“	Cash from Stevens for Books,	2 07	
April 12,	Bought of A. C. Stockin, pr bill,	15 00	
“ 18,	Boston School Supply Co., as per bill,	22 32	
July 1,	Cash for Spellers sold,	3 51	
“	13 Munroe's Spellers, large,	2 34	
“	55 “ “ small,	6 43	
Sept. 1,	Bought of Taintor Bros. & Co., as per bill,	51 84	
Oct. 7,	Bought of Bos. School Sup. Co.,	18 09	
Nov. 18,	A. C. Stockin,	11 88	
1883.			
Jan. 9,	Bos. School Sup. Co.,	26 95	
Feb. 21,	Bal. due L. T. Webster, to bal.,	79 18	
			\$319 29

REPORT OF LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

FEBRUARY 20, 1883.

No. of Volumes in Library, last report	2,173
“ “ Purchased past year,	190
“ “ Presented,	1
	2,364
“ “ Condemned,	10
“ “ Now in Library,	2,354
No of families that have taken books,	150
“ Volumes circulated,	4,477

The Library was not open to the public till May 31, and the number of families that have taken books is less than the year before, still the No. of volumes circulated is greater than the past year, and the circulation has extended in area.

In re-catalogueing the Library, your committee found ten books, of which number, some part of each book was missing, and not being able to repair them, they were condemned and thrown out. The voters have been generous in their appropriations for the benefit of the Library, and we trust they will continue to appropriate as liberally in the future. We sometimes hear from citizens, “the Library is of no use to me.” If those people will consider for a moment, that whatever improves the whole, improves each individual; and that a good public library if patronized to the extent of 4,477 volumes per year, will necessarily exert a beneficial influence upon the public, must, we think, abandon the premises, “the Library is of no use to me”. By reading we familiarize ourselves with that which men of other countries as well our own and men of other ages have learned by experience, and transmitted to us by the aid of books. Reading of scientific books supports and increases mental power, as nutritious food increases physical power. No one thrives upon one kind of diet; neither should anyone confine their reading to one class, but alternate, History, Biography, Fiction, Poetry, etc.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE,

IN ACCOUNT WITH THE TOWN OF NORTHFIELD.

DR.

To Cash on hand,	\$40 73
Appropriation for new books,	200 00
Appropriation for new catalogues,	100 00
Appropriation for librarian and incidentals,	75 00
Cash received from fines,	5 72
Cash received for book sold,	1 87

 \$423 32

1882.

CR.

March 11, By paid for paper and ink,	\$0 25
“ 16, “ “ “ postage stamps,	24
“ 24, “ “ A. D. Stearns, for shelves,	22 50
“ 28, “ “ F. F. Turner, for painting,	12 00
“ “ “ “ for chimney and fluid,	25
April 10, “ “ fr'ght on books from Boston,	96
“ 18, “ “ express on books and labels,	50
“ 20, “ “ for paper for library,	50
“ 28, “ “ Field & Hall, for labels,	4 00
“ “ “ “ F. G. Tilton & Co. for b'ks,	20 08
May 4, “ “ Loring, Short & Harmon for books,	199 82
“ 29, “ “ express on catalogues,	25
June 1, “ “ Selleck & Davis catalogues,	68 30
Aug. 9, “ “ Museum of Antiquity,	4 50
“ 10, “ “ L. W. Rice for binding b'ks,	8 80
Nov. 21, “ “ Lyman Bros., for zinc,	1 35

1883.

Feb. 12, “ “ exp. on paper for covering b'ks,	25
“ 13, “ “ Flora E. Lane, librarian,	60 00
“ “ “ “ Flora E. Lane, as per bill,	2 50
“ 15, “ “ Cheeney & Clapp, for paper,	1 50
Cash in hands of library committee,	14 77

 \$423 32

R. C. WARD, } LIBRARY
 F. H. WRIGHT, }
 J. L. MARSH, } COMMITTEE.

NORTHFIELD, FEB. 24, 1883.

We have this day examined the accounts of Library Committee and find the same correct and properly vouched for.

C. A. WARE, } AUDITORS
 S. G. TITUS, } OF
 A. C. PARSONS, } NORTHFIELD.

